













feel the weight of it at all.

Some people ignore it. Some people silence it. And so we pray that the Spirit would work upon us a great and weighty impression of what eternity means for us.

A great and weighty impression of what Jesus teaches us here in this passage. Now many things can weigh upon us in our lives.

I'm sure many of us know what it feels like when something has been told to us that us, what we could say, rips our heart out.

Someone's come with news to us and we've just felt the weight of it all of a sudden. Something that was serious, something that was heavy, something that was deeply concerning to us.

[ 31 : 20 ] And maybe as a Christian, something that we were burdened to pray for. And maybe it was something that changed your life. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ should be the weightiest of all things that we are told.

It's something that truthfully we need to hear. And what Jesus said to them in this passage was surely something that stopped them in their tracks.

People that were following Jesus and listening to all that he was saying and then he gets this truthful bombshell dropped at their feet. Some will enter into heaven.

Some will not. Strive to enter through the narrow door. Is it something they wanted to hear?

Probably not. Is it something they need to be told?

Definitely was. And so as I look at this passage, we look at this passage together, we can break it into three parts. Firstly, we have a man that comes with this question.

[ 32 : 30 ] So we have a man that faced an unanswered question. He got an answer to his question, but he didn't get the answer that he wanted. We have a man that faced an unanswered question.

Secondly, we have a man that faced a pressing truth.

And thirdly, we have a man that faced an eternal reality. So firstly, we have a man that faced an unanswered question.

Now this is applicable to all of us. I mean, questions arise in our minds, questions that we could have for God. There's many questions that we'd probably like to ask God or ask Jesus.

If Jesus was here with us, what question would you have for him? If you think yourself, what would be the thing that you would want to know, the thing that would weigh upon your mind, the one question that you would have for him if he was here with us tonight?

Maybe you have a question about creation. Maybe a question about the Bible, the doctrines that are in it, the teachings in it. Maybe a question about all the evil in this world. Or maybe you would have a personal question.

[ 33 : 35 ] Why have you allowed this thing to happen to me? Why have I suffered in such a way? Why did I go through these experiences in my life? And we often bring out questions to God in prayer.

But it's true that we don't always get the answer that we'd want or the answer that we would expect.

And in this passage, we have a man that comes to Jesus with his question in verse 23.

Someone said to him, someone that we don't know anything about, we don't have any background about the person, we don't know if he's a Pharisee, that doesn't help us really in trying to understand where he's coming from.

But someone said to him, Lord, will those who are saved be few? Why he chose this question? I don't know.

But I was thinking about that. Why did he choose this question? It's an interesting question to ask. Maybe he heard about all the other things that Jesus had been teaching to love his enemies, the cost of following Jesus, to take up his cross, to live a life that bears good fruit, to live like the good Samaritan that showed great compassion to those that didn't regard him.

[ 35 : 03 ] Or maybe he heard about the man that laid up all his treasure on earth and not in heaven. And maybe he's asking this question with all these things in his background, going, well, who can be saved?

Who can take all the boxes? Is there few that will be saved? I mean, we can only speculate why. We don't know truly why. But there's definitely some background to this question. Would it have been helpful for him to know the answer? Would it have been helpful to know if many would have been saved or many would have been lost?

Is he asking because he's trying to gauge how much effort he needs to put in in his own life? Is he asking if Jesus said to him many will be saved or the majority will be saved?

Then maybe he would relax and think, oh, well, there's a good chance I'll be saved too. Or if he heard the message that few would be saved, surely that would work in him to maybe seek after God all the more and devote himself to God all the more.

[ 36 : 20 ] We don't know. But what we do know for sure is that when Jesus was asked questions, he went right to the root of the problem every time.

And whatever the background was, I believe that he got the answer that he needed to know and not the answer that he expected or wanted.

As we said, we have many questions. We can have many questions. And we have many questions from our own experience, but sometimes it's wise just not to know the answer.

Having the answer can cause as much trouble as it can good and it is in God's providence that maybe we shouldn't know.

And he doesn't tell us. That can be difficult at times. So we have the man here that didn't get the answer that he expected.

[ 37 : 21 ] But he was a man that secondly faced a pressing truth. Now, as we said, we often hear things that maybe we wish were not true.

Things that bother us, things that we're told that won't leave us alone. They go round and round in our heads and they're truthful things that make a huge impression on us in our lives.

And here Jesus sets before him and everyone else that is around him a pressing truth that they definitely needed to hear.

The answer to the question is strive to enter through the narrow door for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

He tells them they must strive to enter the narrow door. This is for all of them, it says in the end of verse 20.

[ 38 : 29 ] He said to them, he said to them, it wasn't just for this man, but it was an answer for all of them to hear. As an answer for all of us to hear this evening.

And as he presents this image of the narrow door, some will enter, he fills it out by almost telling this short story or short parable about it.

The master that leaves this door open, but the master that will one day close this door. Remember, it's all an answer about being saved.

salvation and it is salvation that has been pictured here by this door being open and this door being closed.

And it's a narrow door. It's not a wide door. Now, when Jesus says here to strive, it's a command to the people.

[ 39 : 31 ] And I don't like usually mentioning Greek words when I'm preaching, but the Greek word there that is used for strive is agonizomai. Straight away you can tell where we get the English word agonize from.

And when we know that this word strive carries that aspect of agony, what we understand is that this striving is a hard thing, isn't it?

It's a meaning to strive, to fight, to struggle, to contend. It's what I believe this word was used for in their day.

It's a contending in public games. You can imagine playing one-on-one with someone. If it's badminton or tennis or something like that, you're doing everything you can to beat the other person.

You're doing all you can to win the prize. You're giving it your all. This is the language that is used here. Strive to enter.

[ 40 : 42 ] Give it your all. This is in the context of salvation. In living your life faithfully, to enter into the narrow door, and to follow the narrow way as Jesus also taught in Matthew 7.

It's a challenge. It's a work. It's an exercise. It's a testing. It's an endurance to which the Christian has to give it their all.

You might think, that contradicts the message of simply believe and I'm saved. it's almost like, get your badge and you're done.

Become a member and that's you sorted. In one respect, there's truth to that. But we don't believe in Jesus to come and sit down.

We're not Christians to sit down and relax. but we must say on the other side as well, we're not saved by all the things that we do.

[ 41 : 57 ] There's a balance to be had there. The Christian, when the heart is changed, the work in the heart, should stir the person to do good works, to strive to do and to imitate Jesus Christ and to follow that great example that was set for him and her.

And the simplest way of putting it is, I think, if you think back to Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, he comes to the cross with the weight on his back and the weight is taken away. The story doesn't finish there. He doesn't take out a seat, he doesn't take out a picnic blanket and sit down. He didn't bother then not to do anything else. No, he went on striving, he went on battling, he went on in that difficult journey ahead, day by day, hour by hour, from the get-go.

It was difficult, but it had great blessings. There was difficulties and blessings all the way through this experience of the Christian life. He went to Palace Beautiful, he went to Vanity Fair, he went uphill difficulty, he descended into the valley of humiliation and he even met with the great enemy Apollyon.

He met with the fiercest of enemies on this great day, but he knew he had no armour for his back. He knew he had to just press on, keep going, keep striving, and he knew he had to fight and contend with this great enemy in his experience.

[ 43 : 51 ] And so he did. And yet this enemy nearly defeated him. It nearly had him on the ground with his foot on his neck, but he turned Christian with a sword of the word of God and attacked that enemy and away it went.

Every day he was striving. There was days where there was a great fight, but it was by the word of God that protected him, that kept him.

The power of his God and knowing that God to be his saviour, to be his salvation, he strove on, knowing that there was the greatest of rewards awaiting him at the end of that striving, at the end of that battling, enduring, fighting, believing and faithfully trusting in the word of God in opposition to all sin, whether it came from the world, whether it came from himself.

The Christian battles with the world, the flesh and the devil, things of the world, things from within, and the power of the devil will do his utmost to distract you and to tempt you away.

It's a battle. It's a striving, contending. It's a hard thing to be dollars before yourself even.

[ 45 : 48 ] It's a hard thing to put down your phone and pick up your Bible even at the smallest of things. That's the striving. It's even in these small aspects where the fight is to be fought, where the striving is to be made, to take a verse with us every day, to speak to the people that we meet with in our work as we heard this morning.

It's not an easy thing, even in the most simplest of things, to pray regularly and often. the striving is that there is a door there.

There is a door that is open. There is a door which is the way, the truth and the life. You can't turn back.

You don't have any armour for your back to turn around. We keep going. We strive on. there's no other options really in this world. We have no other options.

So we press on. We strive on. But there's a time when the door is open and the door is closed.

[ 47 : 13 ] And for the unbeliever in this crowd, this aspect is addressed to them for sure. The door is closed but it comes as a surprise that the door is closed.

He's locked out. And this person wants to be saved. He wants to enter in through this door. But they didn't respond rightly.

They didn't strive. They didn't contend. They didn't take it seriously, this weighty matter that was truthfully told to them on the day that they heard. And they even cry out in verse 25, Lord, open to us.

They knew his name. They knew who he was. They cry out all the more in verse 26, we ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets.

Does it normally claim all the more worse? is that not a harder pull to swallow as it were? They were taught from the mouth of the master in their own streets, in their hometown, but they would not come.

[ 48 : 38 ] They heard all about Jesus. They heard all about this door being opened for them. they heard the call for them to come and strive against all sin in this world, but the door is closed.

They acknowledge who he is. They acknowledge they've heard Jesus teach them right on their doorstep, but they're locked out.

I remember speaking to a man in Inverness, someone I knew from here, and he was just walking down the middle of the road, a quiet road, middle of the road, and I kind of jokingly shouted over to him, can't be walking like that down the roads here in this place.

it's not like Lewis, where the roads are quiet. And in the following conversation, it was interesting that we started talking about church and denominations and Christianity, he was saying to me that he was a member, he said he was part of a particular denomination.

He was baptized within that particular denomination. And from all understanding, he assumed that he would be okay because he grew up in this denomination.

[ 50 : 15 ] It was almost like a heritage thing that he trusted in. it was almost like that's where his values were placed. Now, I cannot say whether he entered or not, but what I can say is that the door quickly closed on his life and unexpectedly, I'm sure, for both of us.

And we walk a dangerous road in this life. We don't know what's around the corner for any of us. and we have a warning here announced and shouted to us, truthfully telling us to strive to enter the narrow door.

A warning that tells us that the door is open but the door will be closed. And he's communicating this truth to you today in your home church.

maybe you've sat many times under the word of God. Maybe you've heard all about the cross, heard all about Jesus Christ dying for you.

Maybe you've heard the voice of the Spirit speaking to you, warning you of this day, but you did not respond rightly.

[ 51 : 43 ] well today in the great love and grace of God he extends this message to you again.

To hear and take heed of this warning so that you not fall back into the world's ways, but that you strive and set your mind on following this Jesus to enter through the narrow door.

Jesus says that those who are faithful will enter into his rest. How many will enter? How many shall be saved?

many are implied on both sides, those that will be saved and those that will be lost.

It's explicitly stated, many will seek to enter and will not be able. Jesus set this truth before the crowd and it's a truth that we need to hear this evening too.

[ 52 : 58 ] So we have the man that had his unanswered question, we have the man that faced a pressing truth, but we have a man that faced an eternal reality too. We have an image here of a door being closed, these people being locked out of the master's house where there is a feast taking place.

People are calling out to the master and it's too late for enter. They hear the condemning words of verse 25, I do not know where you come from and repeat it again in verse 27, I do not know where you come from and increasingly so depart from me you workers of evil.

It's almost as if their bridge has been burnt. There's no turning around from this situation. They did not enter and in that place we are told there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

So if they can see into it implies that they can see into the benefits of the blessings of the master's house but they themselves are turned with hatred and weeping because they are locked outside. the difference between the two places is of course heaven and hell. And the truth of the matter is that although we have a story here it is really not a story.

[ 54 : 38 ] It is a truthful thing that we must hear. It is a truthful thing that will last for all eternity, day after day, week after week, year after year and century after century.

Is it a house of blessing or is it to be left outside in burning anger and grievous weeping that you heard the gospel but you did not respond to it?

that you heard the door was open but you did not come? That you preferred to enjoy this world of sin rather than strive towards the narrow door?

God. How many times have you sat in this church and not responded rightly to the gospel message?

Maybe you're thinking I'm not the man to strive. I can't strive. I'll struggle to strive. It's going to be too hard. I'm not going to be able to do it. The years of my sins is too much.

[ 56 : 11 ] Would anyone love me? Well, his love is echoed in his word to you today to tell you truthfully and honestly to come to him to hear this warning that he told these people and he tells us

tonight and it's all been made in love.

It may not be the most comfortable word to hear. It may not be the answer that you were looking for yourself when you came to church this evening.

But Jesus sets this truth before us all. We need to hear it and we need to be reminded of it. We don't know how many days we have, but what is asked of us is to place our faith in Jesus Christ, to strive in that life, to trust in him in every circumstances, in great blessings and great difficulties. And even in the day when we feel like the enemy is on our heels, we're told to trust in the Lord Jesus.

We're told to trust in a God that will keep us. We're told to put all our confidence in him and his word and his promises that are for us to live by.

[ 57 : 53 ] knowing that you don't deserve to enter into the narrow door, but knowing that that is our only salvation.

By trusting in this word, by going on and pressing on, knowing that if we've set our hand to the plough, that we shouldn't look back, as Luke tells us in chapter 9, to strive on and to strive on.

In our experience, we'll face many unanswered questions. But the gospel sets before us truth. and in the love of Jesus he tells us, because we face a reality of heaven and hell at the end of the day. How will you respond to him tonight? How will you respond to this warning once more? The master is holding the door open for us all, calling us to come.

Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow is not promised. Will you enter into the joy of the Lord, or will you find yourself locked out?

[ 59 : 30 ] Consider these things, I pray. We'll pray. Lord, pray that your word would take root in our hearts.

pray that you would bless us through it. Pray that we would learn to live by it. And pray that we would strive in the Christian way, knowing that we are weak, but knowing that you are a God that keeps and upholds us, knowing that you are a God that will not leave us or forsake us, and so help us to walk with you, to hear your call and respond rightly before it is too late.

We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll conclude by singing Mission Praise 275. Mission Praise 275, I Jesus sing Come unto me and rest Lay down now weary one lay down thy head upon my rest

I came to Jesus as I was weary and warm and sad I found in him a resting place and he has made me glad I heard the voice of Jesus say behold I freely hear the living water thirsty water stood down and drink and live I give to Jesus and I drank of that my giving sea my first was quenched my soul reliant and how

I live in him I heard the voice of Jesus say I am this dark world's light look on to me thy morn shall rise and all thy day be bright I look to Jesus and I find in him my star my side and in the light of life I walk till traveling days are done concluding prayer

[ 63 : 38 ] Lord may we walk in your light may you guide us and keep us and that we in our journey of life may know your hand sustaining us and keeping us the way is narrow and the door is narrow so help us to strive we pray in Jesus name Amen